

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BOMBAY 02837 050355Z

70

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AEC-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00 CIEP-01

COME-00 DODE-00 EB-07 FPC-01 H-01 INR-05 INT-05 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 RSC-01 SAM-01 OES-03

SP-02 SS-15 STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-01 FEA-01 PA-01 PRS-01

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R 040925Z DEC 74

FM AMCONSUL BOMBAY

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4929

INFO AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMCONSUL MADRAS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ENRG IN

SUBJ: SAGAR SAMRAT STRIKES OIL

REF A) NEW DELHI 14560; B) NEW DELHI 12883

1. L.T. GARRETT, OFFSHORE INTERNATIONAL IN BOMBAY, RECENTLY INFORMED CONGEN OFF THAT OIL AND NATURAL GAS COMMISSION (ONGC) RIG, THE SAGAR SAVCEO, HAS HIT OIL IN ITS PRESENT LOCATION (REF A), WITH OIL FLOWING AT RATE OF "TWO THOUSAND PLUS" BARRELS A DAY. GARRETT HAD EARLIER INDICATED SOME HOPE THAT ACIDIZATION WOULD INCREASE THE FLOW SIGNIFICANTLY BUT ACIDIZATION APPARENTLY

INCREASED GAS MORE THAN EXPECTED WITH OIL FLOW REMAINING AT "TWO THOUSAND PLUS" BARRELS. OIL HAS BEEN PUT THROUGH SEPARATOR AND IS BEING BURNED OFF THROUGH BAKER BURNER.

2. GARRETT STATED IN THE EARLIER MEETING THAT ONGC WAS DEBATING
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PAGE 02 BOMBAY 02837 050355Z

WHETHER SAGAR SAMRAT SHOULD TAKE "REMEDIAL STEPS" IN EFFORT TO

INCREASE THE FLOW OF OIL AT PRESENT SITE OR WHETHER IT SHOULD GO ON TO NEW LOCATION. HE CONFIRMED DECEMBER 4 PRESS REPORTS THAT FURTHER ACTION WOULD NOT BE TAKEN AT THIS WELL AND SAID RIG WOULD BE MOVING "SHORTLY". (COMMENT: GARRETT INFORMED US DECISION TO MOVE ON WAS, IN HIS OPINION, THE CORRECT ONE.) WE DO NOT HAVE PRECISE COORDINATES OF NEW LOCATION, BUT PRESS REPORTS SAGAR SAMRAT GOING TO NEW SPOT ABOUT 15 KILOMETERS WEST OF PRESENT WELL ON EXTREME FLANK OF BOMBAY HIGH STRUCTURE. WE WILL PASS ON MORE DEFINITE INFORMATION AS WE GET IT.

3. MINISTER FOR PETROLEUM AND CHEMICALS, K.D. MALAVIYA, ANNOUNCED THE STRIKE ON DECEMBER 3, SAYING FLOW COULD BE "ANYTHING BETWEEN 1,500 TO 2,500 BARRELS A DAY". (COMMENT: GARRETT REPEATED HIS ESTIMATE AS RECENTLY AS DECEMBER 4 SO WE WOULD BE INCLINED ACCEPT HIS FIGURE). MALAVIYA STATED STRIKING OIL IN LIMESTONE LAYERS OF BOMBAY HIGH STRUCTURE WAS NEW FEATURE OF OIL EXPLORATION IN INDIA. HE CAUTIONED THAT CONSIDERABLE WORK REMAINS TO BE DONE BEFORE BOMBAY HIGH CAN BE DELINEATED AND STATED THAT IT MIGHT BE YEARS BEFORE IT CAN BE FULLY DEVELOPED. HOWEVER, PRESS REPORTS HE STATED BOMBAY HIGH SHOULD BE PRODUCING ONE MILLION TONS OF OIL A YEAR BY 1976.

4. MALAVIYA DESCRIBED EXPLORATION SO FAR IN BOMBAY HIGH BY OFFSHORE/ONGC AS "GOOD WORK", AND HE ANNOUNCED THAT ONGC HAS BEEN GIVEN GO AHEAD TO HIRE A FOREIGN DRILLING RIG TO EXPEDITE THE WORK IN THE AREA. PRESS REPORTS IN THIS REGARD THAT PLATFORM WILL BE SUPPLIED BY ZAPATA EXPLORATION COMPANY OF HOUSTON (REFTELS). THE MINISTER ADDED THAT ONGC WILL BE AUTHORIZED TO BUY TWO ADDITIONAL RIGS.
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